

# Brookes Behaviour

## Introduction

We expect staff and students to abide by the rules and expectations set out by the University, just as we expect staff to abide by the staff code of conduct. Students can represent the University in a variety of contexts, e.g. in a seminar, wearing a Brookes hoodie around Oxford, on placement or playing sport for the University. Therefore, we expect students' behaviour to accord with following standards at all times:

- Engage with your learning opportunities and any support service you might need.
- Treat other people with consideration and sensitivity, avoiding actions which are likely to cause them distress or harm.
- Value diversity and difference.
- Treat other people with respect, making sure you have [consent](#) for any actions you perform towards them or in relation to them.
- Have care for other people's physical and mental health and safety.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality.
- Respect the University and its property.

Oxford Brookes University is a community aiming to provide a safe, equitable, inclusive environment, where students can demonstrate their learning, develop themselves and live together respectfully. Whether actively studying, on temporary withdrawal, or on a work or study placement, the University expects that students treat each other and themselves with respect.

All students need to maintain an appropriate standard of behaviour for the benefit of all members of Oxford Brookes and the wider community. The following areas are examples of the behaviours we expect.

## Learning environment

Studying at University is likely to be very different from your previous or future learning environments. Overall, you will probably be given greater academic and personal freedom. You may have to learn how to organise your own time so that you get the most from your education and new opportunities.

Lectures, seminars, tutorials and lab sessions should start on time and students should arrive punctually. Late arrivals are disruptive to students and staff. Be respectful - mobile phones must be switched off or in silent mode in lectures or seminars (except in exceptional circumstances and with permission from the lead staff member). Students should not talk amongst themselves when others are speaking to the whole group.

To comply with government guidelines and ensure the safety of our students, we have adapted the way we deliver some teaching: some will be face-to-face and some will be online. You may be required to wear face coverings, observe social distancing, and you will notice some changes to assessments. These measures have been taken for your safety and you should comply with instructions from your module leaders about what is the correct procedure for their learning environment.

Disruptive behaviour impacts on learning and will not be tolerated by staff. University staff have a right to ask disruptive students to leave the session or teaching room, or refer them to the conduct procedures.

## **Social media**

By 'social media' we mean online interactive communication tools, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. Social media is a tool used for a variety of purposes. The University is committed to freedom of expression and encourages students to exchange ideas and participate in debate. However, all social media communications that represent the University must comply with relevant University policies that address staff and student conduct. If you have 'Oxford Brookes University' identified on your social media, you will be representing the University.

If members of staff or students or the wider community are subject to harassment, discrimination or threatening content via social media, it may be reported and investigated. Students and staff are expected to raise any issues directly with the University in an appropriate manner, e.g. if you are displeased with something the University has done, raise this with a representative or submit a complaint so we can take action quickly.

### **REMEMBER!**

Words or pictures shared via social media can be captured, shared widely and retained forever. Think carefully about posting a photo of yourself or someone else, or a comment that could be misinterpreted. Whether it is via a private thread or publicly available it can affect your future career or lead to investigations into your behaviour or your Fitness to Practise.

## **Communication with the University**

The University will send important information via your University email account, so make sure you are reading everything that is sent from all departments of the University as well as specific staff on your course. It is your responsibility to check your University email account regularly so you are aware of information and updates.

Please be respectful when communicating with staff and remember that they are dealing with queries from hundreds of other students, so be patient and do not expect an immediate response. Staff are not expected to work outside of normal working hours and they will respond as soon as they can.

There is a lot of information available on the Brookes webpages; please check all relevant sources of information e.g. Student Information pages, module handbooks, [Student Central FAQ pages](#), Student News webpage etc and also the regular Student News emails before contacting staff with queries.

# Libraries

Our libraries provide communal spaces for students to study and we ask that you are considerate of fellow students when you use our space and services.

In some libraries there are clearly marked spaces that indicate what sort of behaviour and level of noise is acceptable. A traffic light system indicates whether talking is allowed or whether silent study is in place. Please respect fellow students by behaving appropriately in the designated zones.

Space in the libraries is always in demand so students are encouraged to take their belongings away from the library if they are taking a longer break or attending teaching sessions. Students should clear up their space once finished. If you leave your personal belongings (bags, coats, laptops) unattended they may be cleared away.

Students not behaving considerately will be asked to leave or move to an alternative location. Student ID cards should be carried at all times.

To comply with Covid regulations, additional measures may be in place to ensure that library space can be used safely by students; these will be clearly indicated when you come to a library. We want you to enjoy time spent in our libraries and the library teams look forward to welcoming you as regular visitors during your time with us.

# Assessments

As you journey through your degree you will need to demonstrate your learning through assessments. The University expects that you engage with assessments and, if you are finding it challenging, that you actively engage with the support available. There are various support services available to help you with your work, e.g. your academic advisor, your module leader, [Centre for Academic Development](#), subject specific librarians.

If you think you need reasonable adjustments, e.g. for a physical health condition, mental health condition or Specific Learning Difficulty, please register with the [Wellbeing](#) department. Students are expected to familiarise themselves with and use all the support available.

If something unexpected impacts on your ability to study or carry out an assessment you are expected to use the [Exceptional Circumstances](#) procedure.

Cheating is not tolerated by the university; allegations of academic misconduct will be actively investigated by the university and may incur a penalty.

# Relationships

You will meet a lot of new people at University and they might have different experiences, beliefs and expectations from you. Behaviour that is acceptable in one set of friends may be considered

unacceptable in a different setting. Make sure you are respectful with behaviour and actions when interacting. If you are unsure about boundaries, please ask those you are interacting with and always seek [consent](#) for any interaction.

The University takes a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, bullying, hate incidents and sexual harassment. More information can be found on the [Report and Support webpage](#) and in the section below entitled Diversity.

## Diversity

Oxford Brookes aims to promote a culture of respect and trust. Increasing diversity and inclusion, and ensuring everyone is treated with respect and dignity, is central to the University. The University takes a zero-tolerance approach to any form of harassment, hate incident, bullying or victimisation. These include, but are not limited to:

- Use of abusive or offensive language.
- Ignoring or belittling someone's views and opinions.
- Deliberately withholding information or excluding someone which may affect their performance or wellbeing.
- Setting unreasonable demands.
- Excessive supervision or misuse of power or position.
- Making negative comments about personal or physical characteristics or appearance, including teasing, insults or derogatory name-calling.
- The telling of homophobic, sexist, transphobic, ageist, 'ableist', religiously discriminatory or racist jokes and/or banter.
- Publishing, circulating or displaying pornographic, racist, homophobic, transphobic, sexually suggestive or otherwise offensive pictures or other visual or written materials, communications or images.
- Exclusion from normal work or study place, conversations, or social events.

You will come across people at University who have life experiences that are very different to yours, and who behave or express themselves in ways that you are not familiar with. University is a learning environment, and we would encourage you to approach these experiences with curiosity and an open mind.

If you experience or witness an incident that you feel violates someone's dignity, and you feel safe and confident to speak up, try to deal with the situation in a calm and patient manner. You can also report, anonymously if you prefer, through the [Report and Support tool](#). Reporting provides valuable information, helps staff to understand what is happening on campus, and allows us to take disciplinary action if possible and appropriate. If you experience or witness an incident off campus, you can still report it to us and receive support.

If you are concerned that a University or faculty policy or practise violates our commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, please raise your concerns with the [student support services](#).

We understand that submitting a report or a complaint might feel daunting, however we expect all students to raise concerns where they have them. You can access support in making a report or

complaint through the [Brookes Union Advice Service](#), or by raising it with a representative such as a course rep or programme administration team.

If someone has raised a report or complaint about an incident in which you are alleged to have done something, Brookes Union Advice Service can also support you through any procedures.

## Residences

All students and staff within University accommodation have the right to feel comfortable and secure and enjoy their experience, provided this does not adversely impact upon other students or staff.

Occasionally other students will have differing ideas of what communal living involves and they may be incompatible with your own views or experience. Living in University accommodation will often mean having to compromise. To do this, it is important to be respectful and try to understand others.

If you experience behaviour from other residents that displeases you, it is important to try to deal with the matter in a calm and patient manner. First try to speak to the others in your accommodation with the aim of coming up with an agreement. If you are unable to resolve a particular dispute, you should report the incident to the hall warden, or hall manager.

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated by the University. Anyone caught in possession of the restricted drugs will be investigated and, if necessary, penalised through the student conduct procedures and / or police procedures.

We are working hard to ensure that we have all the required and necessary measures in place for arrivals into our halls. Social distancing will be in place and it is important that we all adhere to these rules.

It is important that if you are unsure of what is expected of you in our accommodation that you refer to the hall conduct regulations specifically. We want you to enjoy your university experience, feel safe and protected and get the most from your learning too and moving away from home is a huge part of that. Things will look slightly different this year with controlled flow of traffic in our buildings, but the same friendships and learning experiences await you.

## Health and safety

We want our students to flourish at University and that means being as well as possible, both physically and mentally. We expect students to adhere to all health and safety guidelines the University puts in place and any government advice that may be amended to take into account any current circumstances.

Being part of a University community often means hundreds, or thousands of students living in one large area. Therefore it is necessary that everyone respects health and safety. For this reason, you must not interfere with equipment provided for safety reasons. Smoking is prohibited inside any building operated by the University, including residences (including corridors, foyers, toilets and entrances etc). You should make sure that you do not smoke near doors and outside areas where it is clearly designated as no smoking.

# Covid-19

Covid-19 remains a threat to the health and safety of staff and students, and you are asked to continue to follow the guidance to ensure we keep ourselves and others safe during the pandemic. Please refer to the [Keeping each other safe](#) webpages for the most up to date information about the measures we need to follow.

## Life in the community

Oxford Brookes University campuses are based in Oxford and Swindon, so many of our students live, study and socialise within the city, town and residential areas. The relationship with our neighbours is important to us and we are proud of the contribution we make to the local community. We work with residents to help establish an environment where students feel part of the community and are able to live harmoniously alongside permanent residents. We recommend that students living in the private rented sector introduce themselves when they move in and get to know their neighbours, as any disputes that occur are more likely to be resolved between yourselves where you have established contact.

### Noise

Be mindful of your surroundings and keep noise levels to a minimum. It is particularly important during the hours of 11.00pm and 7.00am, so be careful about loud music and gatherings in private rented accommodation and disruption when you are travelling home late at night. Current responses to the coronavirus situation have resulted in more people having to work from home, so try to keep noise at reasonable levels at all times.

### Waste management

Respect where you live, your housemates and your neighbours. You are collectively responsible as a household for the actions of each other and your guests. Familiarise yourselves with the waste management system in place in your area and be sure to put the bins out for collection on the correct day.

### Parking

We strongly encourage you not to bring a car to Oxford. Car parking is extremely difficult in Oxford and many residential roads around campus are subject to parking restrictions (such as double yellow lines and controlled parking zones).

Parking is available at our Swindon campus and we encourage students to park on site to avoid congestion in the neighbouring streets.

## What can be done if you think someone has behaved unacceptably?

Unacceptable behaviour is behaviour that is experienced as inappropriate, unreasonable, offensive or against the University rules. This could include bullying, discrimination, harassment, threatening behaviour, cheating in assessments and malicious posting on social media. Breaches of the University regulations will be investigated and a penalty may be applied. Some behaviour will also be a breach of

the law and the police could take action. For a lot of instances of unacceptable behaviour, we will expect students to take responsibility for their actions and try to equip themselves with the tools and support to be able to resolve minor issues themselves.

## Speak to them, if you can

If you are finding another student's or a staff member's behaviour unwelcome or disturbing, try initially speaking with them directly. It may be possible that they are unaware that their behaviour is having the impact that it is. If this is not possible or appropriate there are other routes you may wish to pursue, which are listed below.

Remember there may be a valid reason for their behaviour and why it appears they are breaching rules, so be respectful in any attempt to remind others of requirements.

## Try speaking to family or friends or University staff members

You could try speaking to staff at the University, e.g. staff in [Wellbeing](#), [Student Support Coordinators](#), [Brookes Union Advice Service](#), a Brookes Union elected representative, or speak with your friends and family. They might have advice about how to manage the situation or extra support you can receive.

## Report to the University

If an incident has occurred in your university accommodation you can report it to the hall warden, who will be able to discuss next steps. If you experience or see an incident occur on campus and need immediate help, contact the [Security](#) team on 01865 483060.

You can report sexual violence, harassment or a hate crime to our [Report and Support](#) tool. You can do this and give your contact details, or you can do this anonymously.

You can make a [student conduct](#) report if it is about a student, or make a [complaint](#) if the behaviour relates to a staff member. The University will consider your report fully and then take the appropriate actions. These may include:

- An individual investigation into the matter.
- Communication to the individual to state that concerns have been raised about their behaviour.
- A wider campaign if the matter raised is happening on more than one occasion.
- A penalty to an individual, or a group of people.

Sometimes we might not be able to take any direct action. For example, the University is limited in what action can be taken in relation to moderate disputes in private sector houses, or certain behaviour over social media, so in some occasions you will need to work out how to manage the situation between yourselves or will need to report the matter elsewhere. There are likely to be people available to help you. We would also encourage you to use the support services mentioned previously that are available



to you to discuss the impact, even if we have not been able to take any action against the individual you have reported.

## **BEING CHALLENGED**

Do expect staff at University, or other students to tell you if they think you are breaching any University guidelines. They will be doing this to encourage you and help themselves or others feel safe. They should challenge your behaviour in a polite constructive manner. Please be respectful in your response and consider your behaviour.

# **Resources**

- If you are concerned someone has broken the law or a crime is about to be committed, or you are concerned about your, or someone else's, safety, call the Emergency Services on 999.
- If you are on or around campus and need immediate assistance, please contact Brookes [Security Services](#) on 01865 483060.
- [Brookes Union](#) has support, resources and an advice service available to help you with your life at University.
- If you would like more detail about student conduct and making a report, please see these pages: [Student Conduct Procedures](#)
- If you would like more detail about how the University deals with harassment and bullying, by staff members or students, please see these pages [Harassment and Bullying Policy](#).
- Other Support available can be found on this [Need Help Now](#) page.

# **What happens if someone's behaviour is reported to the University?**

Experience shows that most Oxford Brookes students behave well, engage with the University and follow the rules. However, on occasion some students do not and so in the academic year 2019/20 students and staff used the Report and Support Tool, the Student Conduct Procedures and the Harassment and Bullying Procedure to raise concerns about behaviour. If rules have been broken, there are a range of penalties which the University can issue. These penalties range from a warning to dismissal from the University, depending on the severity of the breach.



# Here's what happened in the academic year 2019/20:

## Academic conduct

In 2019/20, over 800 students were reported to the Student Investigation and Resolution Team for academic conduct investigations. The main reasons were for plagiarism, duplication and collusion.

Over 600 were found in breach of the regulations and given a penalty. The penalties have ranged from reducing the mark awarded, to exclusion from the University for the most severe cases.

*If you are finding your academic work challenging, we recommend you speak with your academic adviser or link with the [Centre for Academic Development](#) who have lots of resources and can offer one-to-one academic support.*

## General student conduct

In 2019/20, 40 students were referred to the formal Student Conduct Procedure for a potential serious breach of the regulations. These include inappropriate behaviour over social media, bullying, harassment or discrimination, physical violence and sexual violence. For some of these referrals, precautionary measures were put in place to protect all parties. Where a breach was found penalties included formal warnings, an obligation to seek specialist support and personal conduct orders.

## University accommodation

In the academic year 2018/19\*, there were 778 incidents reported and recorded across all halls of residence. Of those reported, 419 related to antisocial behaviour. Penalties included warnings, behavioural orders, community service and fines for breaches of regulations.

*\*Full data from the period of the pandemic was not available at time of publication.*

If you are finding it difficult living in University accommodation, we encourage you to speak to the warden as early as possible.

## Students in the community

The [Community Engagement Team](#) provides advice and recommendations to help prevent the occurrence of further complaints. When there are persistent breaches of the rules, we can apply penalties, including formal warnings, written apologies, community service, fines and student conduct orders which place restrictions on students' access to services, facilities and/or their participation in events.

In 2019/20 145 students were issued a warning, 58 formal meetings were held and there was a range of penalties applied.

## Report and Support

In 2019/20 the [Report and Support tool](#) received 38 non-anonymous reports of harassment, hate crime and sexual assault, and 14 anonymous complaints.

The Student Welfare Team contacted each of those who reported with contact details, offered support and also explored further reporting options, including to the police and/or to the student conduct process. The Report and Support mechanism enables students to think through how they wish to proceed with the incident and whether they want to start more formal processes.

## **Your time at Oxford Brookes**

Oxford Brookes University aims to provide a safe, equitable, enjoyable, inclusive environment for you so you can engage with your learning and extracurricular activities to your full potential. We value all staff and students and want to ensure they are supported as well as possible and do not experience negative behaviours from other students or staff. We hope this guidance will help you and those you interact with to develop skills that will stay with you long after you have left Oxford Brookes.

**Approved for implementation in 2020-21**

**Updated: September 2021**